Precautions or restriction concerning use of some drugs have been issued from time to time like for Paracetamol, Ciapride, and Minoxidil and Phenylpropenylamin (PPA) etc.

Safety standards for packaged food/bottled water

1273. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken to ensure that safety standards are met by packaged food/bottled water industries, in view of frequent revelations by media of safety hazards of the same, as in the case of a prominent chocolate manufacturer;

(b) the norms being followed in the country *vis-a-vis* those followed internationally and the details thereof; and

(c) the reason for Government feeling shy of punishing the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) The provisions of PFA Act, 1954 and Rules made there under are being implemented by the State/UT Governments and these Governments have been requested from time to time to check the quality of all food products and initiate action as per the provisions of PFA Act, 1954. The State Governments are drawing samples of all food products including chocolates under the PFA Act, 1954.

The safety standards for packaged food/packaged water are notified by the Government of India based on the recommendations of CCFS. Efforts are being made to gradually harmonize the standards for food products with those of codex/international norms.

Reduction in prices of Anti-retrovirus drugs

1274. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA:
SHRI R.K. ANAND:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalized modalities for price reduction

of antiretrovirus drugs to make HIV/AIDs drugs more affordable to patients in the country;

(b) whether Government have any plans to expand the quantum of supply of drugs;

(c) whether Government have set up any group to finalize the expanded programme as well as the strategy for reducing the prices of drugs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (d) Government is contemplating expansion of the ongoing programme of care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS across the six high prevalence states, so as to include anti-retroviral drugs for specific target groups, through the public health care system. A meeting was convened on 17th November, 2003 with the pharmaceutical industry producing anti-retroviral Drugs under the chairperson-ship of Minister for Health & Family Welfare, to discuss the modalities of making available Anti-retroviral therapy to specific categories of people living with HIV, through the public health care system. As a follow-up of this meeting, a Working Group was constituted under the chairman-ship of Secretary (Health) with representatives from pharmaceutical companies, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) to suggest ways for achieving reduction in the prices of anti-retroviral drugs and for deliberating the procurement and installation of testing/diagnostic equipment required for the treatment of the people living with HIV/AIDS.

Recognition to Medical Colleges

1275. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Supreme Court had in its judgement passed on 23rd September, 2003 directed Government not to meddle with nor by pass the Medical Council of India in the matter of recognition of Medical Colleges or increasing the number of seats in them;